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EXAMINER

HARPER, VINCENT P

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2654

DATE MAILED: 05/14/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/891,242

Applicant(s)

KEILLER, ROBERT ALEXANDER

Examiner

V. Paul Harper

Art Unit

2654

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-48 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-48 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All   b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2, 5, 3, 6.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Information Disclosure Statement*

1. The Examiner has considered the references listed in the Information Disclosure Statements dated 6/27/01. A copy of the Information Disclosure Statement is attached to this office action.

### *Specification*

2. The abstract should be in paragraph form and not exceed 150 words in length. Also, the number "2723750" in the upper right hand corner and "FIG 3" in the lower left hand corner should be removed.

Appropriate correction is required.

3. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. The examiner suggests the title "A control apparatus using speech."

4. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

- on page 37, line 11 the word "particular" should be replaced with --particularly--,

Appropriate correction is required.

***Claim Objections***

5. Regarding claims 28, 32, and 42, the first line of each of these claims seems to indicate that the claim is an apparatus claim but the subsequent limitations are listed as methods. A more obvious way to structure the claims might be to use the form –A method in a control apparatus . . . comprising--.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 44 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 44, on line 21, the words “any one of” should be removed.

Regarding claim 45, on line 5, the it is unclear as to the meaning of the phrase “a signal comprising a computer program product.”

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1-4, 11-20, 23-31, and 36-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Buchner (European Patent Application EP 0 911 808 A1).

Regarding claim 1, Buchner discloses a speech interface in a home network environment. Buchner's system comprises: a physical layer to a home network bus on the network device (16) (col. 7, lines 28-30, Figure 2) that receives messages from the speech unit (col. 7, lines 33-37), which corresponds to "receiving means for receiving dialog interpretable instructions derived from speech data processed by the speech processing apparatus"; a memory (13) for holding all the user-network-commands to control the network device (col. 7, 46-50) and a central processing unit that can send and receive messages to and from the speech unit (col. 7, lines 32-37, Figure 4, (41) and (11)), which corresponds to "dialog communication means for interpreting received dialog interpretable instructions using a dialog compatible with the processor-controlled machine and for communicating with the processor-controlled machine using the dialog to enable information to be provided to the user in response to received dialog interpretable instructions"; the ability to download vocabularies stored in memory (13) to the extended grammar section (7d) in the speech unit for a particular network device (col. 7, lines 50-56), which corresponds with "dialog determining means for determining

from information provided by the processor-controlled machine the dialog to be used with that processor-controlled machine"; and a network device with the combined functions for dialog communications and control of the machine (Figure 2, (15), Figure 4, (41)) and support network-controllability via speech (col. 1, 44-47), which corresponds to "machine communication means for communicating with the processor-controlled machine to cause the processor controlled machine to carry out a function in accordance with the dialog with the user."

Regarding claim 2, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a means for locating a device on a network by its ID (col. 14, lines 30-33, Figure 3) and commands such as media descriptors that can be acquired from other sources (col. 14, lines 34-55), which corresponds to "the control apparatus is couplable to a network and the dialog determining means is arranged to determine the location on the network of a file for that dialog."

Regarding claim 3, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a accessible memory in the network device where a list of control-network-commands is stored (col. 7, lines 40-45), which corresponds to "storing means for causing the dialog to be stored in a dialog store of the control apparatus."

Regarding claim 4, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses means for determining media specific descriptions (col. 14, lines 34-55), which corresponds to "means for determining, using

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information provided by the processor-controlled machine, functions available on that machine."

Regarding claim 11, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses dialog states (Figures 9-13) that are determined by the sequence of commands sent (col. 10, line 41-col. 16. line 23), which correspond to "a dialog has a number of dialog states and the dialog communication means is arranged to control the dialog state in accordance with received dialog interpretable instructions."

Regarding claim 12, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses that when a device is newly connected to the network it can send its specific set of grammars to the speech unit (col. 11, lines 49-52), which corresponds to "the dialog communication means is arranged to supply to the speech processing apparatus information relating to the speech recognition grammar or grammars to be used for processing speech data in accordance with a dialog state."

Regarding claim 13, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a system where the user inputs commands by microphone and the signals from the microphone go to a signal processing unit and then onto a CPU for processing (col. 6, lines 18- 24, Figure 1), which corresponds to "audio data receiving means for receiving speech data and audio data transmitting means for transmitting received speech data to the speech processing apparatus.

Regarding claim 14, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a network connection ((5), (6), and (10) of Figure 1) allowing the speech unit to communicate with other devices (col. 6, lines 44-47, Figure 1, (10)), which corresponds to "network interface means for communicating with the speech processing apparatus over a network."

Regarding claim 15, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a network connection from a network device (41) to other network devices attached to appliances (Figure 4), which corresponds to "network interface means for communicating with a processor-controlled machine over a network."

Regarding claim 16, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a wireless network where all the devices can communicate with each other via built-in transmitters and receivers (col. 8, lines 53-56, Figure 5), which corresponds to "remote communication means for communicating with a least one of the speech processing apparatus and a processor controlled machine."

Regarding claim 17, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses a network device with the speech control unit built-in (col. 8, 34-35, Figure 4, (41)), which corresponds to "a control apparatus and an audio input device."

Regarding claim 18, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner's system comprises: a speech recognizer with a



vocabulary and a set of knowledge-bases (or grammars) (col. 4, lines 1-4), which corresponds to "a speech recognizing means for recognizing speech in received audio data using at least one speech recognition grammar;" a converter for converting a user command into a user-network-command (col. 4, lines 4-7), which corresponds to "speech interpreting means for interpreting recognized speech to provide dialog interpretable instructions;" and a means of transporting the command to the device (col. 4, lines 5-7, Figures 1 and 2) which corresponds to "a transmitting means for transmitting the dialog interpretable instructions to the dialog communication means."

Regarding claim 19, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses: software and a CPU for device control (Figure 2, (15) and (12)), which corresponds to "machine control circuitry for carrying out at least one function and a processor for controlling the machine control circuitry"; memory used for processing and storage of a list of control-network commands (col. 7, lines 39-44, Figure 2), which reads on "storing means for storing information for at least one of a dialog file and a device class"; and vocabularies and grammars stored in memory (13) that can be down-loaded into the extended memory (col. 7, lines 50-56), which corresponds to a "means for providing said information to the control apparatus for enabling the dialog determining means to determine the dialog to be used with the processor controlled machine."

Regarding claim 20, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 1); in addition, Buchner discloses: software and a CPU for device control (Figure 2, (15) and (12)), which corresponds to "machine control circuitry for carrying

out at least one function; and a processor for controlling the machine control circuitry"; a memory used for processing and storage of a list of control-network commands (col. 7, lines 39-44, Figure 2), which reads on "storing means for storing a device class for the process-controlled machine"; and a means for locating a device on a network by its ID (col. 14, lines 30-33, Figure 3), which corresponds to a "means for supplying the device class to the control apparatus."

Regarding claim 23, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 19); in addition, Buchner discloses a network device integrated with a speech unit (41) used to communicate with processor controlled network devices connected to appliances, which corresponds to "a network comprising a processor-controlled machine and a control apparatus."

Regarding claim 24, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 23); in addition, Buchner discloses a network device where the network device is integrated with the device being controlled (Figures 2 and 4), which corresponds to "the control apparatus, control device or controller is integrated with the processor-controlled machine."

Regarding claim 25, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 23); in addition, Buchner discloses a system with a separate speech unit (Figure 3, (11)), which corresponds to "a separate audio input device."

Regarding claim 26, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 23); in addition, Buchner's system comprises: a microphone (1) connected to a speech unit (Figure 1), which corresponds to "means for receiving audio data

representing speech by a user"; a speech recognizer with a vocabulary and a set of knowledge-bases (or grammars) (col. 4, lines 1-4), which corresponds to "a speech recognizing means for recognizing speech in received audio data using at least one speech recognition grammar;" a converter for converting a user command into a user-network-command (col. 4, lines 4-7), which corresponds to "speech interpreting means for interpreting recognized speech to provide dialog interpretable instructions;" and a means of transporting the command to the device (col. 4, lines 5-7, Figures 1 and 2) which corresponds to "a transmitting means for transmitting the dialog interpretable instructions to the dialog communication means."

Regarding claim 27, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 26); in addition, Buchner's system includes commands for media descriptors which return information related to specific devices (col. 14, lines 34-36), which corresponds to "a look-up service connectable to the network."

Regarding claim 28, Buchner discloses a speech interface in a home network environment. Buchner's network device (Figure 4, (41) and (11)) has the ability to perform the following functions: send its user-network-command list to the speech unit (col. 13, lines 35-37, Figure 4, (41) and (11)), which corresponds to "determining from information provided by the processor-controlled machine a dialog to be used with that processor-controlled machine;" receive messages from the speech unit (col. 7, lines 25-40), which corresponds to "receiving dialog interpretable instructions derived from speech processed by the speech processing apparatus;" hold in a memory (13) all the user-network-commands to control the network device (col. 7, 46-50) and process with

a central processing unit the messages to and from the speech unit (col. 7, lines 32-37), which corresponds to "interpreting received dialog interpretable instructions using the determined dialog; and communicating with the processor-controlled machine using the dialog to enable the processor-controlled machine to provide information to the user in response to received dialog interpretable instructions."

Regarding claim 29, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 2.

Regarding claim 30, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 3.

Regarding claim 31, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 4.

Regarding claim 36, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 11.

Regarding claim 37, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 12.

Regarding claim 38, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 13.

Regarding claim 39, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 14.

Regarding claim 40, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 15.

Regarding claim 41, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 28). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 16.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

8. Claims 5-10, 21, 22, 32-35, 42-44, and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchner in view of well known prior art (MPEP 2144.03).

Regarding claim 5, Buchner discloses a speech interface in a home network environment which has features described above in claim 1 that correspond to the limitations listed in claim 5; however, Buchner does not specifically disclose that the network device comprises a JAVA virtual machine. However, the examiner takes official

notice of the fact that the use of a JAVA virtual machine as a platform for executing software used for control was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the control code in the control apparatus using JAVA and execute the code on a JAVA virtual machine since JAVA is a popular programming language commonly used in network environments.

Regarding claim 6, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 5); in addition, Buchner discloses features described in the claim 2 rejection that correspond to the limitations listed in this claim.

Regarding claim 7, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 5); in addition, Buchner discloses features described in the claim 3 rejection that correspond to the limitations listed in this claim.

Regarding claim 8, Buchner in view of well know prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 5). In addition, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose means for determining media specific descriptions (col. 14, lines 34-55), which corresponds to "means for determining, using information provided by the processor-controlled machine, functions available on that machine," yet Buchner in view of well know prior art do not specifically disclose the use of the JAVA reflection API to determine this information. However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of a JAVA reflection API for retrieving information about the current Java virtual machine was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the means for determining machine functions with the JAVA reflection API, since this API is a commonly used programming interface for determining information related to JAVA classes and objects.

Regarding claim 9, Buchner discloses a speech interface in a home network environment which has features described above in claim 1 that correspond to the limitations listed in this claim; however, Buchner does not specifically disclose that the network device comprises a JAVA virtual machine. However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of a JAVA virtual machine as a platform for executing software used for control was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the control in the control apparatus using JAVA and execute the code on a JAVA virtual machine, since JAVA is a popular programming language commonly used in network environments.

In addition, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose means for determining media specific descriptions (col. 14, lines 34-55), which corresponds to "means for determining, using information provided by the processor-controlled machine, functions available on that machine," yet Buchner in view of well know prior art do not specifically disclose the use of the JAVA reflection API to determine this information. However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of a JAVA reflection API for getting information about the current Java virtual machine was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the means for determining machine functions with the JAVA reflection API, since this API is a commonly used programming interface for determining information related to JAVA classes and objects.

Regarding claim 21, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 19); in addition, Buchner discloses a system that uses a speech recognizer for controlling different consumer devices including mobile telephones, PCs and printers (col. 1, lines 7-10, col. 1, lines 42-47), but Buchner's list of devices controlled does not include photocopying or facsimile functions. However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of a control system for control of photocopying or facsimile devices was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to expand the list of device functions supported by Buchner to include photocopying and facsimile functions, since these functions were commonly found in home offices.

Regarding claim 22, Buchner discloses everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 19); in addition, Buchner discloses a system that uses a speech recognizer for controlling different consumer devices including televisions, printers, heaters and camcorders (col. 1, lines 7-10, col. 1, lines 42-47), but Buchner's list of devices does not include video cassette recorders, microwave ovens, digital cameras, photocopiers, or lighting systems. However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of



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a control system for control of video cassette recorders, microwave ovens, digital cameras, a photocopiers, or lighting systems was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to expand the list of devices supported by Buchner to include all of those listed in claim 22, since these functions were commonly found in the home.

Regarding claim 32, Buchner discloses a speech interface in a home network environment which has features described above in claim 28 that correspond to the limitations listed in this claim; however, Buchner does not specifically disclose that the network device comprises a JAVA virtual machine. However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of a JAVA virtual machine as a platform for executing software used for control was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to program the control functions in the control apparatus using the JAVA programming language and execute the code on a JAVA virtual machine, since JAVA is a popular programming language commonly used in network environments.

Regarding claim 33, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 32). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 6.

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Regarding claim 34, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 32). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 7.

Regarding claim 35, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 32). This claim is rejected for the same reasons given in the corresponding apparatus claim, claim 8.

Regarding claim 42, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose features described in the claim 32 rejection, above, that correspond to the limitations listed in this claim; however, Buchner in view of well known prior art do not specifically disclose "using a JAVA reflection API to determine from the device class information regarding the processor-controlled machine functions available on that processor-controlled machine." However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that the use of a JAVA reflection API for getting information about the current Java virtual machine was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the means for determining machine functions by using the JAVA reflection API, since this API is a commonly used programming interface for determining information related to JAVA classes and objects.

Regarding claims 43, 44, 47 and 48, Buchner or Buchner in view of well know prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claims 1, 28, 32 and 42, respectively); however, Buchner (or Buchner in view of well known prior art) does not specifically disclose "processor implementable instructions for configuring a processor

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to carry out a method in accordance with claim 1, 28, 32, or 42." However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that programming a processor to execute control functions on a network was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to program a processor to perform the desired control functions on a network since this is a standard way to implement such operations.

Regarding claim 46, Buchner in view of well known prior art disclose everything claimed, as applied above (see claim 44); however, Buchner does not specifically disclose "a storage medium carrying a computer program product in accordance with claim 44." However, the examiner takes official notice of the fact that use of a storage medium with a processor was well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made use a storage medium for storing the process specific code so as be able to load the necessary code on startup.

9. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchner in view of well known prior art and further in view of Hemphill (European Patent Application EP 0 854 418 A2), hereinafter referred to as Hemphill.

Regarding claim 10, Buchner in view of well known prior art do not specifically disclose "a job listener registering means for registering a job listener to receive from the processor-controlled machine information relating to events occurring at the machine." However, the examiner contends that the concept of a "listening" signal

being generated when data is available from a device was well known in the art, as taught by Hemphill.

Hemphill discloses a programmable distributed appliance control system. Hemphill's system includes the ability to generate a signal to an interface (65) when data is available from a consumer device (col. 7, line 55-65).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Buchner in view of well know prior art by providing a notification means from an appliance, as taught by Hemphill, for the purpose of providing a more rapid response when an appliance has data that needs to be transferred to the control device.

#### ***Citation of Pertinent Art***

10. The following prior art made of record but not relied upon is considered pertinent to the applicant's disclosure:

Bertsch, "Programmable Distributed Appliance Control System," U.S. Patent No. 5,570,085, Oct. 29, 1996,

Nolde, "Remote Control System," U.S. Patent No. 6,115,456, Sep. 5, 2000,

Launey et al., "Expandable Home Automation System," U.S. Patent No. 5,086,385, Feb. 4, 1992.

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***Conclusion***

Any response to this office action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to:

Crystal Park II  
2021 Crystal Drive  
Arlington, VA.  
Sixth Floor (Receptionist)

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dr. V. Paul Harper whose telephone number is (703) 305-4197. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marsh D. Banks-Harold, can be reached on (703) 305-4379. The fax phone number for the Technology Center 2600 is (703) 872-9314.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center 2600 Customer Service office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.



MARSHA D. BANKS-HAROLD  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600

VPH/vph  
May 9, 2002